

B-4453

2540-56 DRUID HILL AVENUE

BALTIMORE CITY, MD

Constructed circa 1893, these rowhouses are unique for the neighborhood and may be an example of housing built specifically for company workers. The row contains two-story, two-bay frame dwellings with front porches recessed below the upper story. The original wooden cladding is now covered with a variety of siding. Private access.

AD INVENTORY OF HISTORIC PROPERTIES FORM
ANDTOWN-WINCHESTER SURVEY

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
REGISTRATION FORM

1. Name of Property

historic name N/A

other names/site number rowhouses/ B-4453

2. Location

street & number 2540-56 Druid Hill Ave. not for publication

city or town Baltimore vicinity N/A
state Maryland code MD county Baltimore City code 510
zip code 21217

3. State/Federal Agency Certification N/A

4. National Park Service Certification N/A

5. Classification

Ownership of Property (Check as many boxes as apply)

☒ private
☐ public-local
☐ public-State
☐ public-Federal

Category of Property (Check only one box)

☒ building(s)
☐ district
☐ site
☐ structure
☐ object

Number of Resources within Property

Contributing	Noncontributing
9	<input type="checkbox"/> buildings
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> sites
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> structures
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> objects
9	<input type="checkbox"/> Total

SDI/NPS NRHP Registration Form
(2540-56 Druid Hill Ave.)
(Baltimore City, MD)

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Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

Name of related multiple property listing (Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.) N/A

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: DOMESTIC

Sub: multiple dwelling

Current Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: DOMESTIC

Sub: multiple dwelling

7. Description

Architectural Classification (Enter categories from instructions)

Italianate

Materials (Enter categories from instructions)

foundation

roof

walls weatherboard

other WOOD

Narrative Description (Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.) See continuation sheet.

8. Statement of Significance See continuation sheet.

Areas of Significance (Enter categories from instructions)

Community Planning and Development

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Period of Significance c. 1893-1940

Significant Dates c. 1893

Significant Person (Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

Cultural Affiliation N/A

Architect/Builder Louis E. Wetter, builder

Narrative Statement of Significance (Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.) See continuation sheet.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Maps

Bromley, G.W. and Co. Atlas of the City of Baltimore, Vol. 1. Philadelphia: 1885, 1896.
Hopkins, G.M. Map of the City of Baltimore, Maryland. 1876, 1877.
Sanborn Map Company. Insurance Maps, Baltimore, Maryland, Vols. 2,3, and 7. New York: 1890, 1901, 1914, 1928.
Simmons, Isaac. 1852 Revision of the Thomas H. Poppleton Map. Baltimore: 1852.

Baltimore City Directories.

Baltimore City Land Records.

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property Lot = 15' x 124'

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UTM References (Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

	Zone	Easting	Northing	Zone	Easting	Northing
1	—	—	—	3	—	—
2	—	—	—	4	—	—

— See continuation sheet.

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

Block 3411, Lots 17-25

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The boundaries are based on a city lot(s) retaining original property lines.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Elizabeth Jo Lampl & Kay Fanning/Architectural Historians
organization Robinson & Associates date July 1992
street & number 1710 Connecticut Ave., NW telephone (202) 234-2333
city or town Washington state DC zip code 20009

Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)

name multiple owners

street&number _____ telephone _____
city or town Baltimore state MD zip code _____

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 5 & 6 Page 1

2540-56 Druid Hill Avenue
name of property
Baltimore City, Maryland
county and State

HISTORIC CONTEXT

MARYLAND COMPREHENSIVE STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION PLAN DATA

Geographic Organization: Piedmont

Chronological/Developmental Period(s): Industrial/Urban Dominance

Prehistoric/Historic Period Theme(s): Architecture, Landscape
Architecture, and Community Planning; Social/Education/Cultural

Resource Type:

Category: building(s)

Historic Environment: urban

Historic Function(s) and Use(s): domestic

Known Design Source: Louis E. Wetter, builder

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United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 7 Page 1

2540-56 Druid Hill Ave.
name of property
Baltimore City, Maryland
county and State

DESCRIPTION

A very unique row for the neighborhood, 2450-56 Druid Hill Avenue is comprised of two-story, two-bay frame rowhouses from 1893-96, with front porches recessed below the upper story. This small grouping appears to be an unusually late example of wooden-frame construction. The original wooden cladding is now covered with a variety of siding, obscuring some original detail.

The porches are raised above a basement level, and have turned posts and a variety of railing and baluster types, except for the corner unit, #2540, altered c.1901. The porch of this unit has been enclosed, with a single-leaf door set just two steps above ground level and a pair of square fixed-light windows to its left. The formstone facing of this unit has altered the shape of the original second-floor windows, making them appear segmental-headed. The other windows on the block have lintels and all windows are double-hung with one-over-one sash. Most doors are single-leaf with transoms. All units, even the saloon, still have bracketed wooden cornices with jigsaw molding.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 8 Page 1

2540-56 Druid Hill Ave.
name of property
Baltimore City, Maryland
county and State

SIGNIFICANCE

These frame rowhouses were constructed between 1893 and 1896 just south of the railway depot. The inexpensive and unusual choice of wood, and census information as to residency, suggest that this may have been designed as working housing.

The rowhouses rest on land formerly belonging to H. Moule, who owned much of the land in this section of Penn-North before it was developed. The builder of at least a portion of these unusual rowhouses appears to have been Louis E. Wetter.

In 1893, Alexander D. Johnson executed a lease with Louis E. Wetter, for two and three lots, on the southwestern side of Druid Hill Avenue, 592' southeast of Fulton Avenue, and 628 feet southeast of Fulton Avenue.¹ (The liber and folio of this transaction was inadvertently not recorded.)

Based on measuring these distances on historic maps, this description matches the ground for the first five of the frame rowhouses immediately south of the railway depot (#s 2548-2556). These five units have a slightly different cornice line than their southerly neighbors, and could easily represent a singular construction effort.

The 1893 City Directory lists Alexander D. Johnson as clerk at 225 St. Paul Street. The company for which he worked is unknown. That same year, a Louis E. Wetter is not listed by occupation, but does reside in the neighborhood, at 920 N. Mount Street. In the 1900 City Directory, Louis E. Wetter's occupation is listed as "pat med," and his residence at 1743 Friendsbury Place. Although this listing casts some doubt on Wetter's occupation as a developer/builder, other evidence supports his role as a builder in Penn-North: on June 21, 1892, William L. Weih leased twelve lots on the southwest side of Frances Street, north of Salem United Baptist Church, to Wetter. These are the lots for the rowhouses at 2524-2546 Francis Street. (Liber

¹ If lots are 12' wide, then it would seem that the lease should have read three and two lots, respectively. The current description works if the lots are 18' wide.

J.B. 1399, Folio 161.)

According to census information for 1900, every home at 2540-56 Druid Hill Avenue was rented to a "conductor" or motorman." This pattern suggests that the housing was specific to a railroad or streetcar concern, and may have belonged to the Central Railway Company, which erected its electric streetcar depot next door.

According to the census of 1910, the 2500 block of Druid Hill Avenue as a whole continued to have a preponderance of transportation-related workers. They were all white residents at that time and worked in the following capacities: foreman, motorman, driver, butcher, draftsman, bookkeeper, fireman, and conductor.

SANDTOWN-WINCHESTER/PENN-NORTH
RECONNAISSANCE-LEVEL SURVEY FORM

Survey No. B-4453

Neg. No. 7/14

Historic Name _____

Current Name/Use _____

Address(es) 2540-56 Druid Hill Avenue

Resource/Property Type

☒ Rowhouses
☐ Commercial Structure
☐ Public/Institutional Building
☒ Attached
☐ Public Housing
☐ Freestanding
☐ Site
☐ Other

Note: 2540, saloon c. 1901

Stories 2 + B

Primary Material wood Secondary Material wood

Roof Form flat

No. of Bays in Unit/Facade 2 If Rowhouse: ☒ Flat Front ☐ Swell Front ☒ Porch

Window Type: ☒ Double-Hung
☐ 1/1 Sash
☐ 2/2 Sash
☐ 2/1 Sash
☐ Other Sash
☐ Transom

Door Type: ☒ Single-Leaf
☐ Double-Leaf
☐ Number of panels (if visible)
☒ Transom

Architectural Style Late Italianate Date c. 1890-1901

Summary/Noteworthy Features: Unique row of two-story, frame rowhouses with recessed porch. Wooden cladding now covered with variety of siding materials. Front porches recessed under 2nd story, with turned posts, variety of railings, except for former saloon at corner. Flat-headed door and window openings.

Alterations: ☒ Formstone ☐ Stucco
☒ Vinyl/Aluminum ☒ Window/Door Changes
☐ Awnings ☐ Missing Cornice Elements
☒ First-Floor Use Change ☐ Other: _____

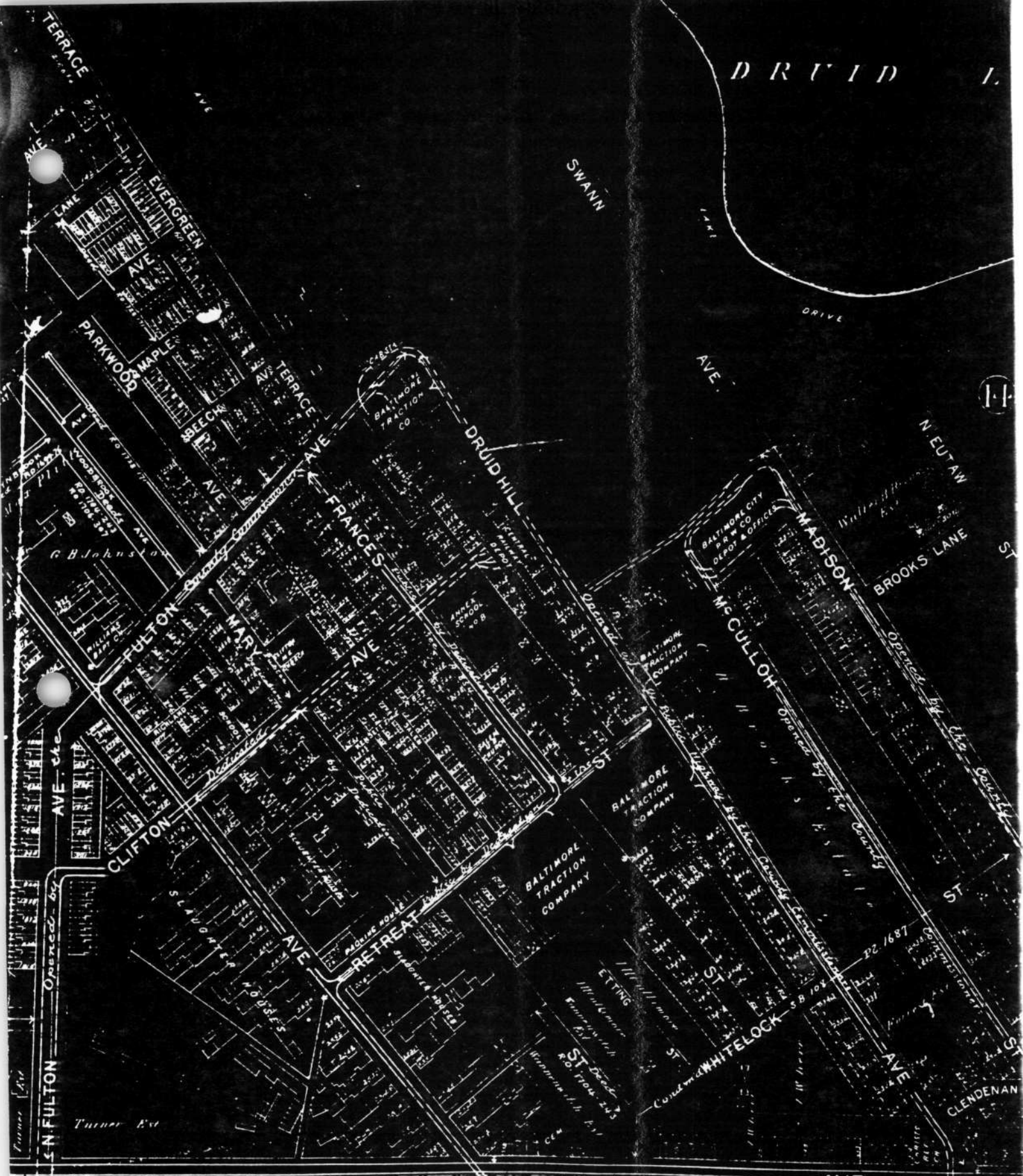
Status: ☒ Occupied ☐ Vacant ☐ Mixed

NR Evaluation: ☒ Contributing ☐ Non-Contributing

Recommended for Intensive Level: ☒ Yes ☐ No

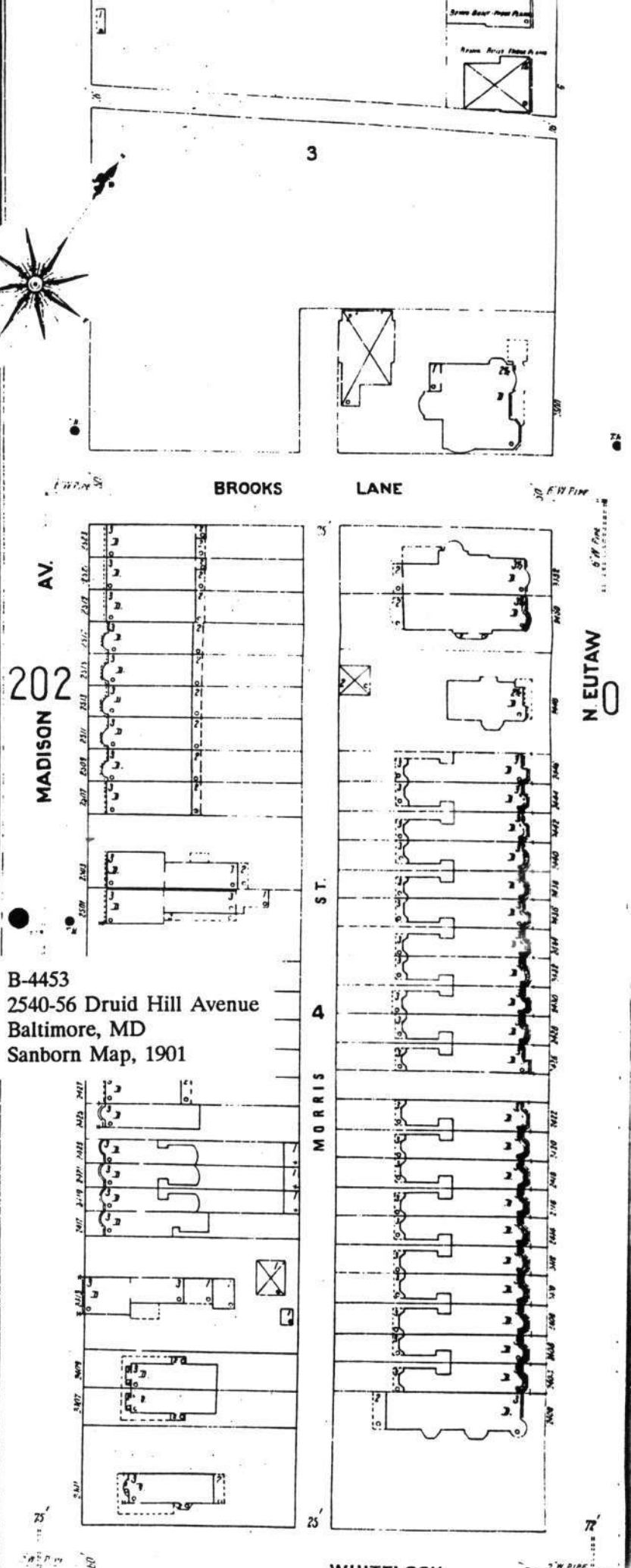
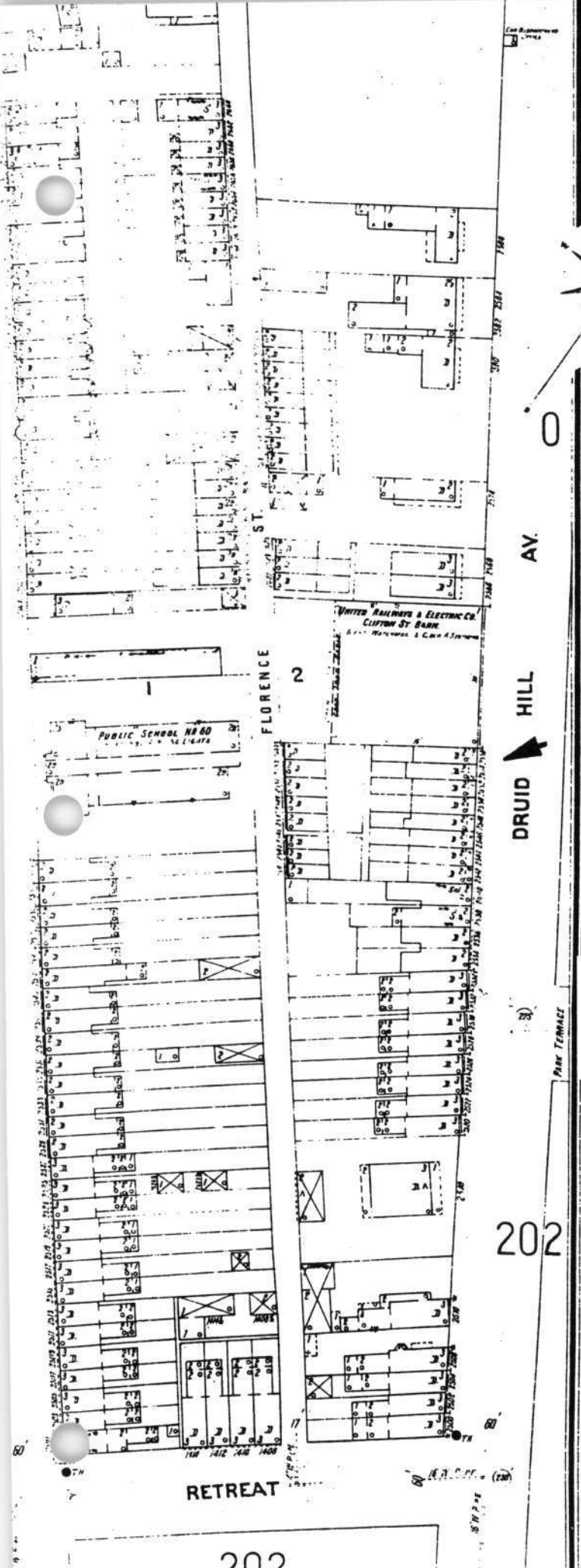
Surveyor: Joey Lampl
Date: February-April 1992

Affiliation: Robinson & Associates

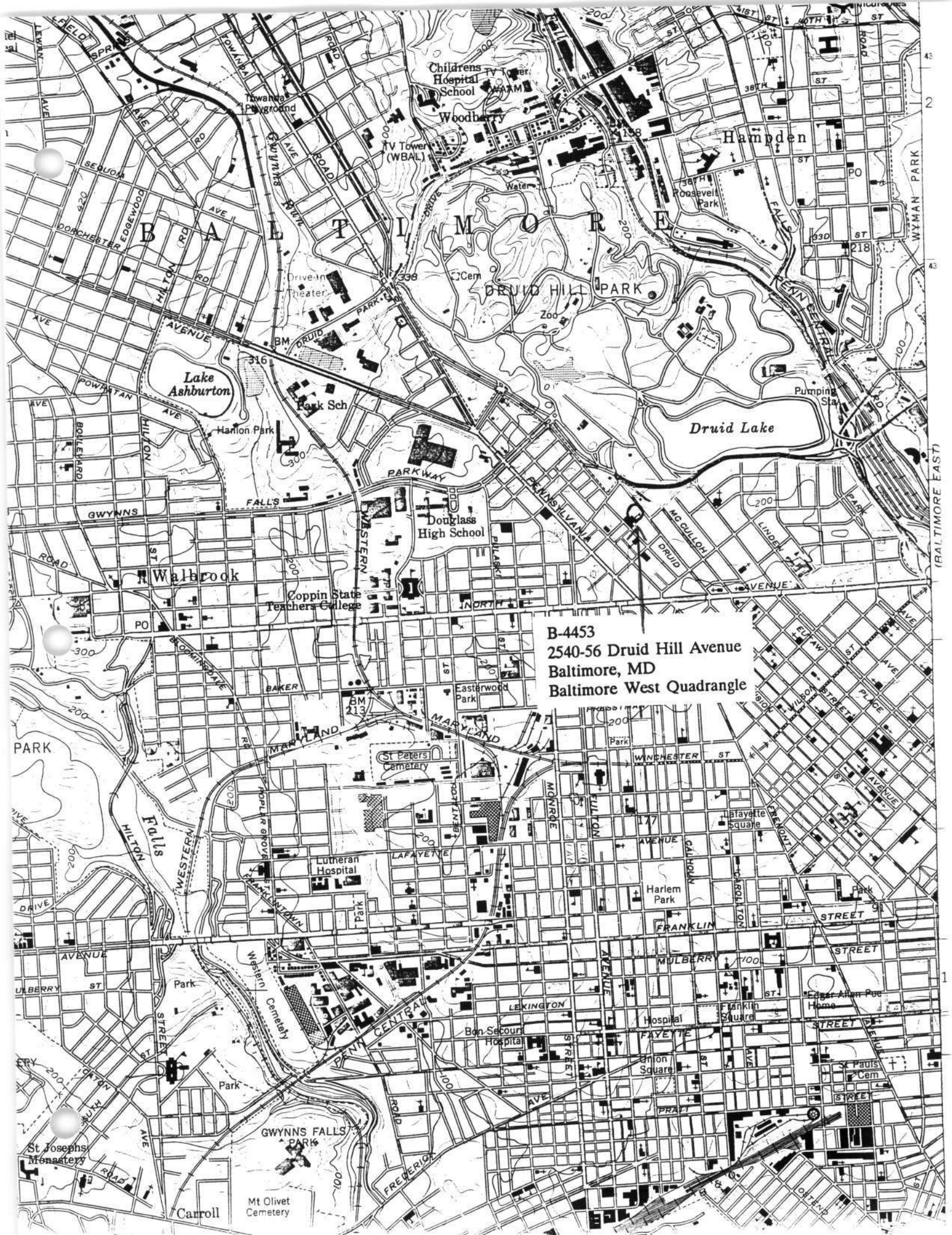


DRUID HILL

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2540-56 Druid Hill
Baltimore, MD
Bromley Atlas, 1896



B-4453
2540-56 Druid Hill Avenue
Baltimore, MD
Sanborn Map, 1901



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2540

2556





SANDTOWN-WINCHESTER / PENN - NORTH

B-4453

BALTIMORE, MD

ELIZABETH CO LAMP-

MARCH 1992

CITY OF BALTIMORE, COMMISSION FOR HISTORICAL AND ARCHITECTURAL PRESERVATION

2540-56 Druid Hill Avenue (2540, SALOON c. 1901)

VIEW FACING WEST

ROLL 7/NEG 14

1 of 2



Sandtown-Windchester / Penn - North

#B-4453

Baltimore, MD

Leonard Jackson

July 1992

City of Baltimore, Commission for Historical
and Architectural Preservation

2540-56 Druid Hill Avenue

VIEW FACING SOUTH

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Roll 9 / Neg 23